

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 04399 180342Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 SSO-00 /013 W
-----036692 180404Z /64
O 180318Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3156

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4399

EA ONLY FOR HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (DAVID D. NEWSOM)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S PLANS

REF: HOLBROOKE-NEWSOM TELCON MARCH 16

1. IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR POSSIBLE DISCUSSION WITH
SECRETARY CONCERNING MY DEPARTURE, YOU MAY WISH TO HAVE
MY FURTHER THOUGHTS.

2. I RECOGNIZE SECRETARY'S URGENT REQUIREMENTS AND AM
NATURALLY EAGER TO RETURN AND ASSUME NEW DUTIES AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE. THREE ASPECTS OF OUR CURRENT RELATIONS WITH
PHILIPPINES, HOWEVER, WOULD UNDER ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES
WEIGHT STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF MY REMAINING HERE UNTIL AFTER
VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. WHILE I AM SURE EACH COULD BE
SATISFACTORILY HANDLED BY STULL OR TOUSSAINT, I ALSO
RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS SPECIAL FACTOR OF AMBASSADORIAL
ACCESS WHICH COULD BE CRITICAL IN EVENT ANY SPEICAL PRO-
BLEMS ARISE.

A. BASE NEGOTIATIONS: WHILE OUTCOME TUESDAY'S MEETING
CANNOT BE PREDICTED, I HAVE FEELING WE ARE MOVING TOWARD
CONCLUSION. TIME BETWEEN NOW AND VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT
MAY PRESENT SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY WIND THIS UP AND ACCESS
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TO PRESIDENT COULD BE CRITICAL.

B. ELECTIONS: FILIPINOS HAVE SUSPICION WHICH IS WIDELY
VOICED THAT THINGS HAPPEN HERE WHEN U.S. AMBASSADOR
NOT PRESENT. WHILE WE PROBABLY DO NOT NEED PAY GREAT
NEED LOCAL SUPERSTITION, THIS WILL BE TIME OF TENSION
WHEN BOTH U.S. AND PHILIPPINE COMMUNITIES MAY FEEL

SYMBOLIC PRESENCE AMBASSADOR IMPORTANT. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT TIME IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING ELECTION WHEN FATE OF AQUINO AND FUTURE PROGRESS "NORMALIZATION" MAY BE IN BALANCE MAY ALSO BE TIME WHEN ACCESS MAY BE REQUIRED.

C. VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT: HERE AGAIN, PLANS ARE GOING FORWARD SATISFACTORILY, BUT PRESENCE AMBASSADOR IN WHAT COULD BE CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON FUTURE U.S.-PHILIPPINE RELATIONS COULD BE HELPFUL.

3. WHILE I DO NOT SEEK ADDITIONAL ROUND TRIP ACROSS PACIFIC, ONE ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE FOR ME TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON FOR CONFIRMATION HEARINGS, AND OTHER PRE-LIMINARIES AND RETURN MANILA FOR ELECTIONS AND VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT.

4. SECRETARY'S NEEDS ARE, OF COURSE, PRIMARY CONSIDERATION BUT I WANT YOU BOTH TO KNOW MY THOUGHTS RE SITUATION HERE. PLEASE ADVISE.
NEWSOM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANILA04399
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780120-0416
Format: TEL
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780352/aaaabrka.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6fa17cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3283331
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR'S PLANS
TAGS: OVIP, (NEWSOM, DAVID D)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6fa17cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014